

day and try to put a positive spin on them, but there is no positive spin.

The bottom line is that this Medicare bill will cut Medicare to basically provide tax cuts for wealthy Americans and that is what this conference report is apparently doing. The bottom line is that it is going to destroy the Medicare program as we know it and make it impossible for seniors to stay in a traditional Medicare program, forcing them into HMOs where they will not have a choice of doctors.

With regard to Medicaid, the same thing is true. Medicaid will no longer be an entitlement. People who are poor, who fall below a certain income, whether they are disabled or pregnant women, whether they are children, in many cases they are not going to be entitled to health care coverage in the way that they have it now, because this bill, no matter how it is hammered out, is not going to provide them the same level of health care, and in some cases a lot of them may not get any health care at all.

I am really outraged again that here we are at the eleventh hour before being told by the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY] that on Friday we will most likely vote on the budget bill that includes these terrible changes in Medicare and Medicaid, and to this day, even those who have been appointed to the conference, who are supposed to work out the details of this bill, have not been told the details of the bill. It is an outrage.

DEMOCRATS EMPLOYING SCARE TACTICS TO FRIGHTEN ELDERLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about Medicare tactics that are taking place by our friends on the other side of the aisle and the administration. They are scaring senior citizens. As the Wall Street Journal editorial talks about, "Scare the Elderly Tactics" are going on right now, and I think it is wrong.

It is sad that they are trying to scare the senior citizens of this country and to make them afraid they will lose Medicare. When the President talks about we want to destroy Medicare, that is scare tactics, and that is wrong to do to the seniors and the elderly of this country.

Let me first of all talk about briefly what our proposal is on Medicare. First of all, we all know Medicare is going bankrupt and we have to do something to save Medicare. We all agree to that. My friends on this side of the aisle, the Democrats agree, the Republicans agree. We all want to keep Medicare. It is an important program. It is an essential program. We have to keep it alive and we have to save it for future generations. So we all agree to that.

The way we save it, Mr. Speaker, is to slow the rate of growth. We will

spend more money every year on Medicare per person. Our spending, and remember these numbers, our spending goes from \$4,800 per person under Medicare to \$6,700, 7 years from today, per person under Medicare. We will increase spending every year for the Medicare Program. Not quite as fast as some people on the other side of the aisle would like us to spend, but we can do it. It is happening in the private sector.

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All we want to do is slow the rate of growth. The way we do this is by offering more choices. Why should we not allow choices to be offered? All Federal employees right now have a choice of plans. We get to choose. Why should not seniors be given the right to choose a plan? That is all we are talking about, slowing the rate of growth, saving the plan, and giving seniors the right to choose. And all the Members on the other side of the aisle want to do is say, that we are scaring seniors, we are going to destroy Medicare, we are going to kill Medicare. That is wrong.

Let us talk about the facts of what the President is doing. He said, oh, we do not want an increase in Medicare part B premiums. Oh, my golly, we do not want to do that. We cannot have an increase in Medicare part B premiums. The Medicare part B premiums today are \$46.10. When President Bill Clinton was first elected it was \$31.80. They have gone up \$14.30 a month since his election. Do you know what happens? Next year is an election year. So he wants to have them go down.

Medicare part B premiums have gone up for 29 out of the last 30 years. But next year is an election year. So we are going to let them go down. And immediately after the election, his budget shows they go up 10.2 percent. In fact, for 6 years following next year's election, under the President's budget, they go up 89 percent.

Why is he saying, "We do not want to increase the premiums on part B, we want to let them go down," and then after the election, jump them? That is the type of scare tactics, the type of thing that should not be taking place in this debate.

Seven years from today, the President's projections on Medicare part B premiums are \$83 a month. Our projections are \$87 a month, \$4 a month difference. Let us get serious about this debate and get on with the real issues.

In Florida, my home State, Members of the other party are experts on scaring seniors. Finally the Washington press corps is becoming a little aware of this. The Florida press corps is very aware of what Governor Chiles did in the last election. He specifically scared seniors to get elected last November. There is no dispute about the facts.

Last November, his campaign and the Democratic Party spent \$360,000 phoning seniors during the last 2 weeks before the election saying there were some fictitious senior citizen organiza-

tion and telling them that Jeb Bush and his running mate wanted to abolish Social Security and Medicare. Just scare tactics entirely.

Why is he doing that? The national press corps, they got all fired up on Willie Horton a number of years ago. Now they will not even get fired up over what Lawton Chiles is doing in Florida, in an orchestrated plan to scare the senior citizens of this country. Speaker after speaker gets up saying we are going to kill Medicare; we are going to destroy Medicare.

It is a good program. We have to keep Medicare. We have to save Medicare. I know they want to save Medicare, too. But stop talking this rhetoric. We have to agree on what we want.

The head of the Democratic Party of Kentucky quoted as saying, I think white-haired people are scared and that ultimately helps us.

Come on. Here is a part of the Democratic strategy that someone happened to get a copy of. Some Democratic strategy. The quote in there is, The natural inclination for people is to think that the GOP wants to cut Medicare, not to make it more efficient but to hurt the elderly. We need to exploit this.

Mike McCurry, the White House press secretary said, "Eventually they would like to see the program just die and go away. You know, that is probably what they would like to see happen to seniors, too, if you think about it."

He apologized for it, but it is scare tactics. They should stop. Let us get down to serious things, the business of saving Medicare.

REPUBLICAN RECORD ON MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I do not often come down into this well in a harshly partisan manner because I do not think most of the issues facing the country are either Democrat or Republican, but tonight I really felt compelled to come down here as a Democrat in memory of a marvelous gentleman that many of us served with named Claude Pepper from the great State of Florida. I hope our dear man, Representative Pepper, is listening to us tonight because he was the man who knew the history of the Social Security and Medicare Programs better than any other Member that I ever had the privilege to serve with.

I know what he would say if he were standing here tonight. He would look to the Republican side of the aisle and say: "I served here when Social Security was first debated and passed. Let the record show there was not one Republican vote that stood on this floor in support of the Social Security Program."